DELAY OF REFORMATION PROVOKING Gods further Indignation:

Represented in

A SERMON

Preached at WESTMINSTER to the Honourable House of COMMONS Assembled in PARLIAMENT at their late solemn Monethly Fast, *April* 29. 1646.

By JAMES NALTON Minister of the Gospell, and Pastor of *Leonards Fosterlane, London.*

LEVIT. 26. 23, 24.

And if ye will not be reformed by these things, but will walke contrary unto mee:

Then will I also walke contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sinne:.

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TO THE

HONORABLE HOVSE of COMMONS now Assembled in PARLIAMENT.

Noble SENATOURS:

I See You are pleased to have not onely Bezaleel's *and* Aholiab's [a] *(choyce and skilfull workemen in that reverend Assembly of Divines) imployed in purging and beautifying the house of God; but you will have some other poore Labourers also set on worke, to bring stones and mortar to the building. And truly, had not I looked above my selfe, at that great God, who when we are faint and feeble,* doth gird us about with strength [b], *The waight of the worke, together with the sense of my owne extreame unfitnesse, to carry the Name of God before such an Auditory, might*

[a] Ex. 31. 2, 6

[b] 1 Sam. 2. 4

have overwhelmed me with ſinking diſcouragements: But if Gods power may get glory by my c 2 Cor. 12. 9. *weakneſſe*, I will rejoyce in my Infirmities c. *I hope, there is none ſhall have ſo low a conceit of my poore parts or paines, but I my ſelfe ſhall have a lower.*

The marke I levelled at in this plain homely piece, now preſented to your view, was the preſſing and promoting the Worke of Reformation, *which how it has been retarded (ſince we entred into that* Solemne ſacred League) *I need not tell you. Sure I am, if either Atheiſts or Papiſts, Neuters or Hereticks, Sectaries or Seducers, Hypocrites or carnall Goſpellers, can doe the Devils worke*, viz. *either perſecute the Woman, or ſtifle her Childe in the birth, or de-* d Rev. 12. 4. *voure it as ſoone as it ſhall be born* d; *this Male-childe of a long expected, much deſired Reformation, ſhall never be brought forth to light. But looke about you, for God looks on you, nay, God looks within you; Hee exactly views (as my Text will tell you) every one of you, how you act your parts on the Stage where he imployes you.*

The Lord has holpen you to carry on your Worke (*the preſervation of a poore diſtreſſed diſtracted Kingdom.*) *Therfore he now expects*

that

that you ſhould help him to carry on His Work, *even* That for which you have lifted up your hands to the moſt high God. *Let it never be ſaid of any of you (ſitting in that honourable Aſſembly) what was ſaid of the Nobles of* Tekoah, [e] They put not their necks to the work of their Lord. *God forbid, that occaſion ſhould be given to faſten that complaint on any of you which the Apoſtle utter's with ſome regret,* [f] All ſeeke their own, not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts. *Certaine it is, the more we ſeeke our ſelves, the more we loſe our ſelves; the more we deny our ſelves, and our own ends, and our owne honour, the more will God honour us both in our perſons and in our places. O that the* zeal of Gods houſe *might* even eat you up g! *O that your hearts were ſo fired with a burning Love to Jeſus Chriſt, and his Government, that you might ſay with* David, [h] I will not give ſleepe to mine eyes, or ſlumber to mine eyelids, untill I finde out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.

[e] Neh. 3. 5.

[f] Phil. 2. 21.

[g] Joh. 2. 17.

[h] Pſal. 132. 4, 5.

Never was Parliament ſo lifted up to heaven in extraordinary diſcoveries of Gods providence and protection, which have beene as a Pillar of a cloud *by day, and a* Pillar of fire *by night, to*

conduct

conduct you through the Wilderneſſe of a Bloody Warre, bringing you from Shittim to Gil-
i Mic.6.5. gal i, *even to the skirts of Canaan: Therfore that which* Joſhua *ſpake to the Iſraelites, when (upon the freſh memoriall of God's miraculous mercies towards them) he renewed a Covenant between them and their God,* k This Stone ſhal be
k Joſh.24. 25,27. a witnes to us, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he ſpake unto us. *The like may I ſay to you; All the Mercies, Victories and Deliverances vouchſafed to you; all the Promiſes, Proteſtations, Covenants and Engagements lying on you, wil witnes either for you, or againſt you, at the great day of your Account.*

The Lord Jeſus Chriſt ſtill ſtand by you; Let his everlaſting arms *be alwayes under you, and ſo eſtabliſh your hearts in his truth and feare, that he may delight in you as* poliſhed ſhafts in his own quiver, *and happy inſtruments of further advancing* Temple-work, *the compleating whereof will be to you a* Name of Renowne, *and to us the joy of our hearts, and the crown of our hopes. It is and ſhall be the conſtant prayer of*

The weakeſt and unworthieſt of them
that ſerve you in the Goſpell,

James Nalton.

A SERMON PREACHED TO the Honourable Houſe of COMMONS on the Monethly Faſt-day, *April* 29. 1646.

JEREM. 13. 27.

I have ſeen thine Adulteries and thy Neighings, the lewdneſſe of thy Whoredome, and thine abominations on the Hils in the Fields: Woe unto thee, O Jeruſalem, wilt thou not be made cleane? when ſhall it once be?

THIS Text may well be called an *awakening Trumpet*, ſounding a loud alarme in the eares of an impenitent, unreformed people: Many warnings had God given to *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, before they felt that fatall blow in the *Babyloniſh* Bondage: One among the reſt is proclaimed in this Chapter, *ver.* 14. *I will daſh them one againſt another, even the Fathers and the Sons together; yea, I will daſh them in pieces like bottles of Wine*, ver. 12.

(Alas, alas, poor *England* in this bloody inteſtine Warre ha's made a ſad Comentary on this mournfull Text:) Upon this warning God cals them to a deep Humiliation, *ver.* 18. *Say unto the King and to the Queen, humble your ſelves and ſit down:*

Obſerv. *Great ones* and Nobles, Senatours and Stateſmen in a day of Humiliation, muſt forget their greatneſſe, ſit downe in the duſt, and lye low before the Lord, as well as the meaneſt of the people: They (notwithſtanding this Summons) are ſo farre from Humiliation, that they are entertaining thoughts of ſelf-juſtification, *ver.* 22. *Wherefore come theſe things upon me?*

Hereupon the Lord deales more ſharply with them, evidently convinceth them of their ſinfulneſſe, and ſeverely threatens them for their ſtubbornneſſe, *I have ſeen thine adulteries and thy neighings, &c.*

The Text will ſpread it ſelfe into three Branches.

I. An undeniable conviction; *I have ſeen thine adulteries, &c.*
II. A dreadfull commination; *Woe unto thee O Jeruſalem.*
III. A patheticall expoſtulation; *Wilt thou not be made cleane? when ſhall it once be?*

In the firſt, God ſilenceth their complaining, that they

Obſerv. might have nothing to object againſt the equity of his proceedings; *I have ſeen* thy guiltineſſe: *God will have every mouth to be ſtopped, and all the world to become guilty before him* [a].

a Rom. 3. 19.

In the ſecond, he foretelleth their miſery (now ready to fall upon them) that they might tremble at it, and be affe-

Obſerv. cted with it; *God would have his people deeply apprehenſive of the ſad ſignes and ſymptomes of his diſpleaſure.*

In the third, he reaſons the caſe before he proceed to execution; *God had rather glorifie his mercy in our reformation, then*

Obſerv. *his juſtice in our ruine and condemnation.*

Let me firſt break up the Text in the tearmes of it, and then deale out the obſervations.

I have ſeen thine adulteries:] The great ſinne that God chargeth

chargeth on them, and whereof he doth convince them, is Idolatry, which is here aggravated,

1 By the Titles given to it.
2 By the severall circumstances of it.

First, the Titles are these, it is called *adultery*, *whordome*, *abomination*. 1 The Titles.

First, Idolatry is called adultery and whoredome, because it is a sinne that defiles the conjugall Bed, cuts the marriage knot between God and his people, and provokes the Lord to give them a bill of divorce: [b] *When backesliding Israel committed adultery, I put her away and gave her a Bill of Divorce.* b Jer. 3 8.

Secondly, it is called *abomination*, the Hebrew word comming from a Root [c], which signifies to loath or detest, as being that sin which God most detested and abhorred. c שקץ

And there is an Emphasis in the Affix [*thine*] thrice repeated in the Text; *Thine* adulteries, *thy* whordome, *thine* abomination.

Observe here, all the idolatries and abominations practised on the Hils, in the Fields, and in the Villages round about *Jerusalem*, they are all charged upon *Jerusalem*; they are *thine abominations*; why so? Because *Ierusalem* was the *Metropolis*, or Mother-City of the Kingdome: There sate the *Sanhedrim*, and there were the Courts of Justice [d]; they had power in their hands to suppresse these abuses, but they did not make use of their power for that purpose; therefore (saith God) *they are thy sins*, and shall be put upon thy account. d Psal. 122. 5.

It is worth the noting; *When Magistrates are careless in suppressing abuses, these abuses shall be charged upon the Magistrates*: When the people gathered Mannah on the seventh day, the Lord chargeth the sinne upon *Moses* [e], though *Moses* himselfe was not guilty: The Lord said unto *Moses*, *How long refuse ye to keep my Commandements and my Lawes?* Note. e Exod 16. 28

Secondly, the Circumstances aggravating their Idolatry are efour. 2 The Circumstances.

First, it was a sinne not once, but often committed; thine *adulteries*, in the plurall number: And a sinne, the ofter it is committed, the greater it is, as a cloth dyed red, if it be dipt againe, it is dyed yet redder.

Secondly, it was a ſinne committed with greedine ſe an great delight, therefore it is expreſſed in this terme, *Neighings*; a bruitiſh tranſgreſſion hath a bruitiſh expreſſion; and it is obſervable;

Wicked men by ſinfull courſes become bruit beaſts, unmanning themſelves, loſing not onely their conſcience, but their reaſon alſo: So was it with this people here in the Text, *They were mad upon their Idols*, as it was ſaid of the *Caldeans* [f]: Even as mad as pamperd, frolick horſes are in the heat of their luſt: Yea, the ſame Hebrew word [g] which ſignifies to neigh, ſignifies alſo to ſhout for joy, as *Ier.*31.7. *Sing for gladneſſe and* [h] *ſhout among the Nations*, where the ſame word is uſed: So that it was a ſin committed with great delight: And this is certaine, *the more delight we take in our ſins, the leſſe delight God takes in our ſoules.*

Thirdly, their hearts were ſo taken up with this ſinne, that God had no room there, like an unchaſte woman, that thinks of nothing but her luſtfull Lovers [i]: This is implied in the word *Lewdneſſe*, or the (*Thought*) of thy whoredome; ſo the word [k] properly ſignifies, and ſo judicious *Calvin* renders it [l].

Fourthly, they committed this ſinne in publike view, not onely privately in a corner, but on the hils and in the open fields, *Upon every high hill, and under every green tree, they wandred and plaid the harlot* [m]: Impudency in ſin is one of the higheſt aggravations of ſin: *Were they aſhamed when they had committed abomination? Nay they were not at all aſhamed, neither could they bluſh* [n].

Now (ſaith God) I have ſeen all this with an eye of Jealouſie, and an eye of juſtice, I have ſeen it to cenſure it, I have ſeen it to revenge it, for ſo it followes

Woe unto thee O Ieruſalem:] As if he ſhould ſay, O unhappy *Ieruſalem*, that art ſo deſperately ſinfull, and doſt not yet repent nor reforme to this day! great miſery and calamity doe I denounce againſt thee, as one devoted to deſtruction.

Wilt thou not be made cleane?] I know the words are diverſly read by Interpreters; but quotation of Authors is a Theefe in an Auditory; Some read the words without a queſtion thus

[f] Jer.50.38.
[g] צָהַל
[h] צָהֲלוּ
[i] *Quemadmodum mulier impudica nihil aliud cogitat quam ſpurcos ſuos amatores* Calv. in locum.
[k] זִמָּה
[l] *Cogitationem ſcortationis tuæ.*
[m] Jer.2.20.
[n] Jer.8.12.

thus, *Thou shalt not cleanse thy selfe hereafter* o: But this reading suits not so well with the last words *, *After how long yet?*

Some read them thus, *Thou wilt not be cleansed by turning after me*: Thus mistaking a vowell in the Hebrew word, for it is not אַחֲרַי After me, but אַחֲרֵי After, or hereafter.

But the sense is plaine enough, as reverend *Calvin* (an Interpreter, *instar omnium*) does well expresse it; *Wilt thou not be made cleane?* As if he should say, Is thy heart sohard that thou canst not yet repent nor reforme, after all exhortations, invitations, woes and warnings? The pressing, piercing interrogation addes great strength to the expression p.

When will it once be?] or, After when yet? or, How long yet? q that is, how long wilt thou continue unreformed? How long shall I wait till thou be cleansed? how long wilt thou delay and take time with me from day to day?

The words being thus opened, many observations might be thence deduced, but I will not pluck every cluster that this fruitfull bough doth hold forth.

There are three speciall points (suitable to the three parts or branches which I named even now) that will draw forth the strength of the Text.

Doct. 1. *God takes precise and speciall notice of all the sins and abominations of a people that are in covenant with him.*

Doct. 2. *These sinnes and abominations provoke him to expresse his anger in dreadfull Comminations.*

Doct. 3. *Those dreadfull Comminations denounced against a people, call for a speedy Repentance and Reformation.*

I shall begin with the first point as it lyes in order:

God takes precise and speciall notice, &c. Doctr.

For the proofe of this, the Scripture is abundantly plain and pregnant: *I have seen this people* (saith God) r *and behold it is a stiffe-necked people*: Stubbornnesse of heart is not obvious to mans eye (for *God*, and onely God, *knowes the hearts of all the children of men*, saith *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 8. 39.) yet God takes notice of it: The Lord tels this Prophet *Ieremy*, speaking of

o *Septuag. Hieron. A. Montan.*

* מָתַי עַד

p μεγάλη τῆς ἐρωτήσεως ἐνεργεία.

q *Post quantum adhuc temporis?* Jun.

r Deut. 9. 13.

of the diſſembling Jewes; [r] *Mine eyes are upon all their wayes, they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquities hid from mine eyes*: We may think to thruſt God out of our ſight (*When God is not in all our thoughts* [t]) but we cannot thruſt our ſelves out of Gods ſight: [v] The Elders of *Iſrael*, becauſe they committed wickedneſſe in the dark, every man in the chambers of his Imagery, therefore they ſaid, [w] *The Lord ſeeth us not*: But Gods takes away this Coverſhame, *Jer.* 23. 24. *Can any man hide himſelfe in ſecret places that I ſhall not ſee him, ſaith the Lord; Doe not I fill Heaven and earth, ſaith the Lord; Darkneſſe hideth not from him, but the night ſhineth as the day* [x].

r Jer.16.17.

t Pſal.10.4.

v *Te mihi latere poſſum, non me tibi.*

w Ezek.8.12.

x Pſal.39.12.

Reaſ. 1. For firſt, *God hath an eye of omniſcience*, he knowes not only our works and ways, but the inward frame & temper of our hearts; [y] *Hell and deſtruction are before the Lord, how much more then the hearts of the Sons of men*: And if the very windings and ſhufflings of our trecherous hearts are obvious to his eye, then certainly our outward actions and enormities are much more conſpicuous and apparent: Doth not the Apoſtle ſay, *All things are naked* [z] *and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to doe*: Mark the expreſſion, [a] for it is fuller then one word can render it; it is a metaphor frō a Beaſt whoſe skin is flay'd off, and cut up by the chine bone, that you may ſee all his entrals, which the Heathenifh Prieſts in their Sacrifices were wont to doe, when they did (to uſe *Lucian's* words) [b] μυσκοπεῖν καὶ ἐξελάζειν εἰς ἐντελές, *i. e.* exactly view and take notice of them; the Lord ſees our very reynes, as if the thoughts and ſecret workings of our hearts were unbowelled before him.

y Prov.15.11.

z Heb.4.13.

a γυμνὰ καὶ τετραχηλισμένα

b Lucian *de Sacrif.*

Object. But doth not our Saviour ſay concerning wicked men, *Depart from me, I never knew you* [c]; It ſeems then that God doth not know all men, and all things upon the earth?

c Matth.7.23.

Anſ. God knows not the wicked with a *knowledge of approbation* (for ſo he knows the righteous only [d]) but he knows them and all their actions with a *knowledge of obſervation*: The whole frame of their hearts, and all that their heart frameth [e], all their deſires and deſignes, intentions and inventions, plots and practiſes are obſerved by his alſearching eye, and ſhall be accounted for before the Tribunall of Chriſt at the great day.

d Pſal.1.6.

e Gen.6.5.

The

2ly The Lord takes notice, *because he hath an eye of jealousie:* He is a *jealous God* [f], very apprehensive of any conjugall unfaithfulnesse, and ready to revenge it: As a tender husband, the more dearly he loves his wife, while shee is loyal to him, the more grievously he is offended if she prove trecherous: This is that which God complaines of by his Prophet, [g] *Surely as a wife trecherously departeth from her husband, so have you dealt trecherously with me, O House of Israel:* And God makes this an aggravation of their offence; [h] *They brake my Covenant, though I was a husband to them*, saith the Lord. *Reas.* 2.

[f] Exod. 20. 5.

[g] Ier. 3. 20.

[h] Ier. 31. 33.

3ly As he has an eye of jealousie, *so he has also an eye of justice*, having appointed a day *wherein he will judge the world in righteousnesse* [i], *and bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evill* [k]: And the Prophet makes this one reason, why he observes and takes notice of all the ways and works of the Sons of men; [l] *Thine eyes are upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.* *Reas.* 3.

[i] Acts 17. 31.

[k] Eccl. 12. 14.

[l] Ier. 32. 19.

But this point will not need so much confirmation as application.

For *instruction*, there are two lessons hence arising, by way of inference, which may much conduce to our Humiliation in the presence of God this day. *Use* 1.

The first is this, *Gods patience towards us is infinite:*
The second this, *Our presumption in sinning against him is intolerable.*

For the first, see and admire at that *Patience* and long-suffering, which Heaven and earth, men and Angels may stand amazed at; that the Lord of glory (whose power and purity, omniscience and omnipresence, justice and jealousie doe dazle the eyes of the very Angels) should see all the abominations committed under the Sun, heare all the execrable oaths and blasphemies that are belched out against him, observe the insolency, scorne and rage of presumptuous sinners, that *set their mouths against the Heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth* [m]; yet doth not all this while set the world on fire about our ears, or thunderbolt us from Heaven, or *take us away with the stroke of his hand* [n]. 1 *Instruction.*

[m] Psal. 73 9.

[n] Job 36. 18.

Doe

Doe but conſider theſe [redacted] remarkable things in God.

A piercing eye, and
A powerfull hand.

The one to ſpye, the other to puniſh; and withall ſeriouſly weigh that infinite and unconceivable holineſſe and purity of his nature, that *he cannot endure iniquity* [o]; and then break out into admiration and ſay, O infinite patience and long-ſuffering! that thou, O God, ſhouldeſt ſupport us in our being at that very time, when we are fighting againſt thee by our provocations and rebellions! whereas didſt thou withdraw thy hand but one moment; we ſhould drop downe to hell. Would any King endure to ſee a Traytor abuſe his Titles, villifie his perſon, revile his children, contemne his lawes, and doe as much as in him lyes to caſt his Crowne downe to the ground? yet this our God endures with unwearied patience: May not we ſay with the Prophet, [p] *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not conſumed*: Oh that we could now begin to admire the boundleſſe, bottomleſſe Ocean of that mercy and loving kindneſſe which ſwallowes up all our thoughts, and will be matter of gratulation and admiration to all eternity, ſaying, [q] *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever becauſe he delighteth in mercy.*

o Hab. 1. 13.

p Lam. 3. 22.

q Micah 7. 18.

2 *Inſtruction.* For the ſecond; our *preſumption* in ſinning againſt him is intollerable; becauſe all our ſinnes admit of this aggravation, that they are committed full in the face of God, [r] *It is a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face*: This is that which may prick our hearts, and wound our ſoules in all our confeſſions and humiliations, when we can ſay with *David*, [s] *Againſt thee, thee have I offended, and done this evill in thy ſight*: Thou haſt been an eye-witneſſe of all my ſtubbornneſſe and undutifulneſſe, of all my trechery and hypocriſie, of all my wandrings and backſlidings.

r Iſa. 65. 3.

s Pſal. 51. 4.

This was one thing that let the *Prodigall* blood in the heart-veyne, and ſtroke him with penitentiall remorſe, *viz.* That in his wandring from his Father, *he went into a farre Country* [t], as thinking to be out of the reach of his Fathers eye;

t Luke 15. 13. v, 18.

eye; but when he returnes, he bewailes this, *ver.* 18. *I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee:* Mark the phraſe, *Before thee*; he looks on his ſinne, as committed in his Fathers eye all the time: It were an intollerable impudency for a wife to dally with a ſtranger in the preſence of her husband, or for a villaine to offer violence to a Queen while the King looks on, (*Will he force the Queen alſo before me in the houſe*, ſaith *Ahaſuerus* concerning *Haman* [v]) Or a Theefe to cut a purſe in the face of the Judge ſitting on the Bench; or for a Subject to ſet the Crowne on anothers head, when the King himſelfe is ſtanding by: Yet thus deale preſumptuous ſinners with the Lord every day; and is not this a provocation intollerable?

[v] Eſter 7.8.

What an aggravation was that of *Nimrods* ſin [x]; *he was a mighty Hunter before the Lord*; ſo deſperately bold was he in his boyſtrous tyranny, that he was not afraid to act it *before the Lord:* And are there not ſome that dare call Heaven to record for ther fidelity in the publick cauſe of Religion, when God and their owne conſcience know the contrary?

[x] Gen. 10.9.

Are there not ſome like *Ephraim*, of whom God ſaith [y], *He is a cunning Merchant, the ballances of deceit are in his hand, and he loves to oppreſſe*; *yet* (as if he would mock the God of Heaven to his face) *he ſaith, I am become rich, I have found me out ſubſtance, in all my labours they ſhall find no iniquity in me that were ſin:* As if he ſhould ſay: God makes me proſper, though it be in a way of injuſtice and oppreſſion, therefore he hath no quarrell with me at all.

[y] Hoſ. 12. 7, 8.

Oh the horrible, helliſh Atheiſme that doth poſſeſſe our hearts! Are ye offended at the harſhneſſe of the expreſſion? Ye muſt know, there is an Atheiſt in affection as well as in opinion; [z] *They ſay to the Almighty, Depart from us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy wayes:* There is an Atheiſt in practice as well as in profeſſion; [a] *They profeſſe they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable and diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate*: Are there not many of us that profeſſe we know God, and in our tongues dare not deny him, yet in our life and converſation carry our ſelves, as if God had but the eye of a picture, without life or motion in it: Are there not

[z] Job 21.14.

[a] Tit. 1.16.

many of us who make of the great God of Heaven (with reverence be it ſpoken) no better then a *Baal*, a ſleepy, ſenſleſſe, careleſſe God, that neither regarded iniquity, nor rewarded duty? Are there not many who (as much as in them lyes) put out the al-ſeeing, al-ſearching eye of his omniſcience, and cut off the arme of his revenging juſtice, as if he would neither ſee nor cenſure any of their tranſgreſſions?

If pilfring *Achan* had thought that the eye of the Lord had followed him (as *Eliſha* told *Gehazi*, *that his heart went along with him*, when he received the preſent at *Naamans* hand[b]) durſt he have ſtollen the wedge of gold, and Babyloniſh garment, and ſo have tranſgreſſed in the curſed thing? If thoſe two looſe profeſſors *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, could have reaſoned as holy *Job* did, [c] *Doth not the Lord ſee my wayes, and count all my ſteps?* durſt they have lyed unto the holy Ghoſt? If traiterous *Judas* had thought the eye of his Maſter had watched him, durſt he have nibled money out of his Maſters bag? If we in our actings for God, our ſeekings and ſervices, did but really think that the frame and temper of our ſpirits, our very ends and aimes are as obvious to the eyes of God, as our actions are to the eyes of men; were we but fully perſwaded of this, that he obſerves whether we be ſound at heart, or rotten at core; durſt we lye unto the Lord and cozen the world, and in the end cozen our own ſoules? But we think it not, I ſay it againe to our ſhame, we think it not: We have poore low thoughts of God and of his greatneſſe, majeſty, power and glory; we are ready to think wickedly of God, *That he is ſuch a one as our ſelves* [d]: In ſtead of raiſing up our thoughts to God, we pull downe God unto our thoughts: This is our *Atheiſme*, this is our *Preſumption*; let us ſee it, and bewaile it, and be humbled for it.

b 2 King. 5.26

c Job 31.4.

d Pſal. 50.22.

2 *Uſe, Examination.* Let the ſecond Uſe be for Examination: Take occaſion to enter into the Cloſet of our owne hearts, to ſee how the caſe ſtands between God and us: This ſhould be a day of ſelf-ſcrutiny and ſelf-reflection, wherein we ſhould *ſmite upon* [e] *our thigh with Ephraim, and be aſhamed,——yea even confounded before our God:* It ſhould be a day wherein we ſhould *plough up*

e Ier. 31.19.

up our fallow ground [f], ransack every corner of our soules, and turne the inside of our hearts out unto the Lord. [f] Jer. 4. 3.

Let us therefore search our hearts, and sift our lives, whether there be not those sinnes and abominations among us, which the Lord beholds with an eye of jealousie: True it is, that Kingdome killing sin of Idolatry (which God so deeply chargeth on them in the Text, is in a great measure suppressed among us; and, blessed be the Lord, who hath put it into the heart of this honourable Parliament, to purge out the dregs of that leaven, which the Lord hates in his very soul, and to pull down that proud oppressing PRELACY, and those prelatical popish Innovations, which were the props and pillars of Idolatry:) But are there not other God-provoking, Heaven-daring, wrath-procuring sins yet unpurged out, which in the sight of God are very odious and abominable? May not God speak to his Ministers concerning *England*, as he does to *Ezekiel*? [g] *Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations*: Let me instance in some particulars. [g] Ezek. 16. 2.

First, is there not abundance of *swelling pride*, and that is one abomination; for *every one that is proud in heart, is abomination to the Lord*, saith *Solomon* [h]: We have yet as lofty looks and scornfull carriages, and ambitious aspirements, puffing at Superiours, trampling on Inferiours, high conceits of our selves, low conceits of others, as we had before this bloody war began: God hath pul'd us downe in our estates but he hath not pul'd downe our pride; we are brought upon our knees, but our hearts are not humbled. 1 *Abomination.* [h] Prov. 16. 5.

Secondly, is there not abundance of *Hypocrisie* among us? which is another provokefull abomination; for *the Hypocrites in heart heap up wrath*, saith the Scripture [i]: Now we are for the generalla *hypocriticall* Nation, and therefore a *people of Gods wrath*, as God spake of the *Jews*, *Isa.* 10. 6. We are a Nation full of wit, and therfore full of craft and guile; God may say of us as he did of *Ephraim*; [k] *Ephraim compasseth me about with lyes, and the house of Israel with deceit*: We can give good words (they cost us nothing) just as the *Israelites* did, whom the *Psalmist* mentions; [l] *When he slew them, then they sought him,* 2 *Abomination.* [i] Iob 36. 36. 3. 13. [k] Hos. 11. 12. [l] Psal. 78. 34.

they returned early & enquired after God,&c. But they did but flatter him with their mouth, and lyed unto him with their tongues, for their heart was not upright with him, neither remained they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant: Here is a lively Image or repreſentation of our double-dealing with our God in the time of our ſtraights: We doe not ſeek God for *God*, but for *our ſelves*; we doe not ſo much ſerve him, as ſerve our own turns of him; we pretend a willingneſſe to be reformed, but when it comes to the quick, to *take Chriſts* Yoake on our neck, to have *purity* of Ordinances and *power* of godlineſſe meet together; to have ſtrictneſſe of Sabbaths and ſtrictneſſe of converſation kiſſe each other; to have plain powerfull convincing heart-humbling, ſoul-healing preaching, now we ſhrink and draw back, and are afraid of a refining Reformation; this argues the diſhoneſty of the heart.

The truth is, we would faine have Religion and our luſts together, we would have a Reformation that might ſuit with our owne humours, ends and intereſts, and make Religion a ſhooe fitted to our owne laſt; is not this to be hypocriticall in our ends and aimes? We come to heare Ser-
[m]Ezek. 33. 31 mons juſt as they did in *Ezekiel's* time; [m] *Son of man, this people ſit before thee as my people, they heare thy words, but they will not doe them; for with their mouth they ſhew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetouſneſſe:* So at this day, many of you will give us the hearing, but ye will doe what ye liſt: Ye come to *judge* the Sermon, not to be judged by the Sermon (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks in the like caſe, *Jam.* 4. 11. *If thou judge the Law, thou art not a doer of the Law, but a Judge*;) Ye would have witty Sermons and reproofe at a diſtance, and love not the jewell of plain-dealing: Look as men commend the ſweetneſſe of Roſewater, but ſtart and turne away if they be beſpinkled with it; ſo ye love to heare the truth, and commend it, but like not that it ſhould touch ye, or come too cloſe unto you: Ye come (on ſuch days as theſe) to hear your ways reproved, but have no ſerious purpoſe to have your wayes reformed; we may preach what we will, ye wil practiſe what ye pleaſe.

Is not this a piece of hypocriſie which the Lord abhorreth?

Thirdly,

Thirdly, is there not a great deale of *impenitency and ſtubbornneſſe under Gods corrections?* Me thinks I heare the Prophet *Jeremy* complaining of us as he did of the *Jewes* in his time; * *O Lord thou haſt ſtricken them, but they have not grieved, thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive correction, they have made their faces harder thē a rock, they have refuſed to return:* There is a ſpirit of *inſenſiblenеſſe* * ſeized upon us, that we do not lay to heart one of the ſoreſt of Gods plagues, one of the ſharpeſt of his arrowes; this man-devouring, land-deſtroying ſword, that hath eaten ſo much fleſh, and drunk ſo much blood, and is not yet put up into the ſcabberd: We are like the Drunkard that *Solomon* ſpeaks of, [n] *that ſleeps on the top of a maſt, and lyeth downe in the midſt of the Sea; they have ſtricken me (ſaith he) and I was not ſicke, they have beaten me, and I felt it not:* Oh how provokefull is this to our God, and to the eyes of his glory, to ſee us a people ſo ſtupid, ſo ſenſleſſe, ſo lockt up in our owne hearts, that neither ſins nor miſeries, nor meanes, nor mercies, nor word, nor ſword can work upon us!

3 *Abomination.*

* Ier. 5. 3.

* πνεῦμα κατανύξεως. Rom. 11. 8.

n Prov. 23. 34, 35.

Ye ſhall read of ſome of Gods ſervants recorded in Scripture, that have been more affected with an evill threatned, then we are with a judgement inflicted: Look on godly *Joſiah*, he hath his heart tender and melting, when he heard the words of the Book of the Law [o]: Look on *Habakuk*, he hath his belly trembling and lips quivering, and rottenneſſe entring into his bones [p]: Look on *Iſaiah*, his loynes are filled with paines, pangs took hold on him, as the pangs of a woman that travelleth, he was bowed downe at the hearing of a hard viſion, he was diſmayed at the ſeeing of it [q]: Theſe holy men were deeply affected with a calamity, that was but like to come upon them, but we are not ſenſible of a dreadfull judgement that is already come upon us: I pray God a *deep ſleep from the Lord be not fallen on us*, ſuch a one as fell on *Saul* and his Army [r], when the Lord purpoſed to deliver *Saul* into *Davids* hand; for we bear off all Gods blows with head and ſhoulders, as *Jeruſalem* did, when ſhe ſaid, [s] *Woe is me for my hurt, my wound is grievous, but I ſaid, Truly this is a griefe, and I muſt beare it*; as if ſhee ſhould ſay, It is a bur-

o 2 Kin. 22. 11

p Hab. 3. 16.

q Iſa. 21. 3.

r 1 Sam. 26. 12

s Ier. 10. 19.

den, and I muſt beare it as well as I can: Doe but examine our thoughts, conſider our ſpeeches, look into our houſes, obſerve the generall deportment and carriage of men under this heavy judgement of a Land-waſting war, and you may ſee that literally fulfilled in our times, which the Prophet ſpeaks of concerning *Iſrael*; [t] *He hath powred upon him the fury of his anger, and the ſtrength of Battell, and it hath ſet him on fire round about, yet he knew it not, and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart.*

t Iſa. 42. 25.

4 *Abomination.*

Fourthly, is there not a great deale of *injuſtice and oppreſſion* yet among us? And this is a crying abomination; [v] *The cryes of the oppreſſed enter into the ears of the Lord of Hoſts*: Yet how many poore oppreſſed ones cry and cry againe, but are not heard, nor remembred, nor relieved; They have debts due unto them, but are ready to ſtarve for non-payment, they are diſtreſſed, but have no helper.

v Iames 5. 4.

Nay, are there not ſome that make no conſcience of paying debts, becauſe they are under *protection*.

O that God had no cauſe to utter that complaint which he doth by the Prophet *Iſaiah*; [w] *Judgement is turned away backward, and Juſtice ſtandeth a far off, Truth is fallen in the ſtreets, and Equity cannot enter; and the Lord ſaw it, and it diſpleaſed him, that there was no judgement.*

w Iſa. 59. 14, 15.

Where the courſe of Juſtice is ſtopt, it is not for me to enquire, look YEE to that, to whom it belongs (for God looks for it at YOUR hands, whom he hath called [x] *Gods*, and he will one day call ye to an account, and ſay, [y] *Doe ye indeed ſpeak righteouſneſſe O Congregation? Doe yee judge uprightly O ye ſons of men?*) Only this I ſay, Stop the courſe of Juſtice, and ye ſtop the courſe of a River that will overflow all Bounds and Bankes, and drowne the Countrey round about.

x Pſal. 82. 6.
y 58. 1.

If the cryes of the oppreſſed be not heard, our prayers and humiliations will not be heard; ſo ſaith the Lord expreſly, [z] *I deſpiſe your* FAST *dayes, and I will not ſmell in your ſolemne Aſſemblies, unleſſe Judgement run downe as waters, and righteouſneſſe as a mighty ſtreame.*

z Amos 5. 21, 24. } compared.

Fiftly,

Fiftly, have we not our Wilderneſſe-provocations? So much *murmuring and repining* at the paſſages of Gods providence in theſe dayes of trouble, that God might juſtly ſwear [a] *Your carcaſes ſhall fall in the Wilderneſſe, and yee ſhall never ſee the Land of Canaan:* Are we not extreamly unthankfull in receiving mercies? and ſhamefully barren in improving mercies? May not it be ſaid of us, as it was ſaid of the ingratefull *Iſraelites*, [b] *They forgat God their Saviour, which had done great things in* Egypt, *wondrous works in the Land of* Ham, *and terrible things by the red Sea:* Even ſo is it with us; we have in a manner forgotten the mervailous things that God did for us at *Edgehill*, at *Newbery*, at *Marſton-moore*, at *Nazeby*, famous *Nazeby*, never to be forgotten while we have a tongue to ſpeak the praiſes of our God, for THERE [c] *did God break the Arrowes of the Bow, the ſhield and the ſword, and the battell:* Selah. There did God ſo break the power and pride, and rage of the enemies, that he dealt with them as he dealt with *Pharaoh*, [d] *Sonne of man, I have broken the Arme of* Pharoh *King of* Egypt, *and loe it ſhall not be bound up to be healed, to put a rowler to bind it, to make it ſtrong to hold the ſword:* Yet all theſe mercies, miracles of mercies, and glorious Victories have been made ſcarce nine dayes wonder. Nay worſe then this, *We have provoked him at the Sea, even at the red Sea* [e]: that is, In the ſenſe and under the fruition of ſpeciall mercies, and extraordinary deliverances vouchſafed to us: We have not been better'd but rather made worſe by Mercies and Victories beſtowed on us: Gods gracious favours have been fuell to feed our pride and covetouſneſſe, and contention, &c. Showres of mercy have made the weeds of corruption grow the faſter: Such dunghilly hearts have we, that the more God ſhines on us with his mercies, the more we putrifie; the better he hath been to us, the worſe have we been to him, and the more he hath loved us, the leſſe hath he been beloved of us; and *doe ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe* [f]?

5 *Abomination.*

[a] Num. 14. 29 30.

[b] Pſal. 106, 21 22.

[c] Pſal. 76. 3.

[d] Ezek. 30. 21

[e] Pſal. 106. 7.

[f] Deut. 32. 6.

What an intollerable provocacion muſt this needs be? This unthankfulneſſe and unanſwerableneſſe of heart to Gods gracious dealings and diſpenſations, it is *Obex infernalis*, (as one cals it) a helliſh ſtop or bar to future favours:

A man that is about to poure in ſome precious oyle into a glaſſe, if he ſee the glaſſe crackt, he ſtayes his hand, and ſaith, I will poure no oyle into this glaſſe: An unthankfull heart is a broken glaſſe.

6 Abomination.

Sixtly, is there not a *notorious contempt of Miniſters and Miniſtry* among us at this day? Heretofore yee could ſay of Miniſters that were faithfull, [g] *How beautifull are the feet of them that preach the Goſpell of peace, and bring glad tydings of good things?* But now they grow out of credit and eſteem.

g Rom. 10. 15.

Yea our very calling begins to be queſtioned and brought to the bar; and (ſay ſome) *Ye take too much upon ye, ye Sons of Levi* [h]; Too much ſtate and power, too much honour and holineſſe, in appropriating theſe adminiſtrations to your ſelves, wherein all the people might partake with you. I dare boldly ſay, never was there in any age or Nation under Heaven, a greater contempt caſt upon this Ordinance, then there is at this day, eſpecially by ſubtle and undermining *Sectaries* and Seducers, who caſt dirt upon the very paps which they have ſucked, villifying thoſe Miniſters and that Miniſtry, whereby they were firſt enlightned.

h Num. 16. 3.

[i] To whom I ſay in the words of the Apoſtle, [i] *Take heed ye deſpiſers, and wonder and periſh:* Ye read of a *Damoſell* poſſeſſed with a devill, that cryed out concerning *Paul* and *Silas* (who were Miniſters of Chriſt) [k] *Theſe men are the ſervants of the moſt high God, which ſhew unto us the way of ſalvation:* The Devill himſelfe durſt not ſpeak *irreverently* or *contemptuouſly* of the Miniſters of the Goſpell: Contempt of the Miniſtry therefore is a grievous provocation, which God will not put up at our hands; *For when they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his Prophets,* THEN *the wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his people, till there was no remedy* [l].

i Acts 13. 41.

k Acts 16. 17.

l 2 Cor. 36. 16

Now doth not God ſee all theſe ſinnes and provocations; and if he ſee, will he not cenſure?

I know the uncovering of this ſink of our abominations is unpleaſing to you: Every unwelcome truth (though it proceed from the Father of lights) is looked on as a baſtard, no man will owne it till it be laid at his owne doore:

But

But when God comes to charge these, or any of these abominations upon the conscience, then ye will begin to entertaine those sad and serious thoughts that holy *Job* did; [m] *What then shall I doe, when God riseth up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him?* It is a small matter for me (a poore mortall man like your selves) to reprove you, but when *God reproves you, and sets these things in order before your eyes*; how will ye hold up your heads before your Judge?

m Job 34.14.

Let a word of exhortation therefore be welcome to you: Two duties there are which this Doctrine presseth on every soule here present; the Lord help us to put them in practice.

3 *Use, Exhortation.*

First, Let us see our sinnes that God may not see them: Let us behold them with sorrow and shame, for our humiliation, that God may not behold them in anger for our condemnation: Let us set them before our face, that God may cast them behind his back; when *David* could feelingly say, *my sin is ever before me*, he might more hopefully pray, *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities* [n]: Certaine it is, if we discover our sins, God will conceale them, if we conceale our sins, God will discover them [o]; if we forget our sins, God will remember them; if we remember our sins, God will forget them [p]: Better it is for us to see our sins here, and *judge* [q] our selves for them, then that Cod should see them hereafter, and passe sentence against us, to our everlasting horror and confusion.

1 *Duty.*

n Psal. 51.3 9 } compared.

o *Si tu tegas ille reteget, si tu retegas ille teget.*

p *Obliviscere benefactorum & Deus reminiscetur; Reminiscere peccatorum, & Deus obliviscetur.*

q 1 Cor. 11.31

Secondly, if God so exactly take notice of all our transgressions, let us learne this duty; to walk more warily and watchfully before our God; let us walk exactly, [r] as in his presence; learne to eye and observe him at all times, in all actions, in all companies, on all occasions: Thus did *Abraham* [s], *He walked before God: The Lord, before whom I walk* (saith he) *will send his Angel with thee, &c.* He did walk in Gods eye and presence all the day; And thus should we doe: [t] *Ought We not to walke in the feare of our God, because of the reproach of our enemies?* Now if we did thus, what a curb or bridle would this be, to restraine us from sinne and sinfull courses?

2 *Duty.*

r ἀκριβῶς περιπατεῖτε. Ephes. 5.15.

s Gen. 24.40.

t Neh. 5.9.

I have read a ſtory of a Religious man, who being deſirous to reclaime an unchaſte woman from her lewd and ſinfull converſation, took this courſe with her; He came to her, pretending to have ſome wanton dalliance with her, ſo it might be with all ſecrecy; ſhe thereupon led him from room to room; but he ſtill made many doubts, leaſt at this window, or that key-hole, this crevis or that cranny, ſome or other might chance to peep in and eſpy them together; at length ſhe brought him to the inwardeſt room in the houſe, where (ſaith ſhe) I am confident that none, upon my life, can poſſibly pry in, or take notice of any thing that we doe: Whereupon he told her with weeping eyes, *No bolts nor bars can keep God out, no wals nor doors can hinder his piercing eye-ſight*; and what ſhall we gaine (ſaith he) by ſhunning the eyes of men, when the eye of our God is ſtill upon us?

It was good councell that a *Rabbin* gave to one of his Schollers: There are three things I would have thee remember all the day long:

An Eye that ſees thee:
An Eare that heares thee:
A Hand that Regiſters all thy Actions.

So ſay I to thee (O ſecure, ſin-ſleeping ſoule) if thou canſt find one houre wherein Gods eye is not upon thee, take that houre to be ſecure and ſinfull, to be merry and mad, to doe the Devils work with diligence, or Gods work with negligence: but if God's eye be alwayes on thee, let thine eye be alwayes towards him, *as the eyes of a maiden are unto the hand of her Miſtris* [v]: If he watch over thee, doe thou watch with him all the day long, and ſay of every place where thou commeſt, what *Hagar* ſaid of that Well, which ſhe called, [w] *Beer-la-hai-roi*, that is, *The Well of him that lives and ſees me.*

[v] Pſal. 123. 2.

[w] Gen. 16. 14.

I have been ſomewhat large in the firſt point, the other two I ſhall diſpatch with a quicker hand.

Theſe

THese sinnes and abominations provoke him to expresse his anger in dreadfull Comminations; *Woe unto thee O Jerusalem:* thus God is said *To roare out of Zion* [x]; yea, so to roare, that he makes the Heavens and the earth to shake and tremble; he is said to *sweare in his wrath* [y]; to be *angry with the wicked every day*; to *whet his sword, and bend his Bow, and make it ready* [z]: How many curses and comminations do's God denounce against impenitent sinners? As, that they shall be *Cursed in the City, and cursed in the Field; cursed in their basket, and in their store,* [b] *&c. cursed in all they have, and all that they put their hands unto*; yea, God threatens that he will *curse their blessings* [c]; he will make their wealth to be their woe, their pleasure their poyson, their flourishing their perishing, and those things which should be for their good, shall be traps and snares, and thornes, and occasions of falling,

Doctr. 2.

x Joel 3.16.
y Psal. 95.11.
z Ps. 7.11,12.
b Deut. 28.16 17.&c.
c Mal. 2.2.

Becuse sin is to the Lord infininitely { 1 Provokefull. 2 Odious. 3 Injurious. } *Reasons.*

First, it is so *provokefull*, that it is frequently called a provocation [d], as being that wherewith God is exceedingly grieved [e], fretted [f], vexed [g], burdened [h], resisted [i], for all these expressions the holy Ghost useth to set forth the provokefull nature of it.

d Psal 95.8. Nehem. 9.18.
e Gen. 6.6.
f Ezek. 16.43
g Isa. 63.10.
h Amos 2.13.
i Acts 7.51.

The *Rabbins* have a Proverb, That *every sinne makes God's head ake.*

But we may adde somewhat more, and say, sin is not only a head-aking, but also a kind of heart-breaking unto God; it is that patheticall expression which God himselfe useth, *Ezek. 6.9. I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me.*

Yet take this Caution along with ye, when ye read that God is vexed and fretted, and provoked with heart-breaking griefe, &c. you must know, Anger in God, is not a passion as it is in us (for he is a simple and uncompounded Essence, free from all passion and perturbation) but *Anger in God, is a Will or Inclination to punish sin, arising from the detestati-*

Caution.

on of sin: That as man expresseth his anger in his countenance by frowning, in his speeches by threatning, and in his actions by punishing; so doth the Lord discover his anger also in the same manner; he frownes on the wicked, and
k Psal. 34.16. sets his face against them [k]; he threatens them with dreadful
l Jer. 21.5. denunciations [l], and executes the judgements which he
m Psal. 9 16. hath threatned [m].

Reas. 2. Secondly, sin as it is very *provokefull*, so it is very *loathsome*, therefore called in the Text *Abomination*: No carcasse or carrion so loathsome in our sight, as sin is in the sight of that
n Hab. 1.13. God, *who cannot behold iniquity* [n]: Hence is God said to *loath*
o Zech. 11.8. the sinner, [o] *My soule loathed them, and their soule also abhorred*
p Levit. 26.30 *me*; and he tels his owne people, [p] *My soule shall abhorre you.*

Yea, so loathsome is sin, to his pure and perfect nature, that he hates it in his owne children, as well as in stangers: It is true, it is not a hatred *redounding to their persons*, yet he hates sin in them, though he doe not hate them for sin: At the same time, when he dearly loves the person of a Beleever he deadly hates the sin of a Beleever: As when *David* committed adultery, the Text saith, *The thing that* David *had done*
q 2 Sam. 11. 27. *displeased the Lord* [q]: Though *Davids* person was accepted, his sin was abhorred.

Reas. 3. As sin is very *odious*, so is it also very *injurious* to the God of Heaven: In the least sin that can be committed, we doe the greatest injury (for the kind of it) unto God, that can be expressed; because in every sin there is an infinite Majesty offended, an infinite Justice wronged, an infinite patience provoked, an infinite mercy abused, and therefore an infinite punishment deserved.

Besides, in sin we often arise to a *despising* of God; *Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandement of the Lord*, saith God
r 2 Sam. 12.9: to *David* [r]; Yea, to a despiting of God. We read of some
s Heb. 10.29. *that doe despite to the spirit of grace* [s]; yea further, to an interpretative domineering or insulting over God; *Thou hast made*
t Isa. 43.24. *me to serve with thy sins* (saith God [t];) sin makes God a servant, and man a Master: Nay yet more (if more can be said)

laid) sin riseth (with reverence be it spoken) to a dethroning of God, it strikes at his Crowne and dignity, even to un-God him, if it were possible; Must not all this make God exceeding angry?

First, it will serve for our Instruction in two particulars. 1 *Use, for instruction.*

The first is this; That it is a dreadfull thing to fall into the hands of an angry God, for he hath treasures of woe and wrath laid up in store for those that doe provoke him: *Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up in my Treasures* v? True it is, when God is pacified, then it *is better falling into the hands of God, then into the hands of men, for his mercies are great* x: But if his wrath be once kindled, then *the sinners in Zion shall be afraid, fearfulnesse shall surprize the Hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire, who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings* y? 1 *Instruction.* v Deut. 32. 34 x 2 Sam. 24. 14. y Isa. 33. 14.

O the desperate folly and madnesse of presumptuous sinners, that dare *stretch out their hands against God, and strengthen themselves against the Almighty* (as the Scripture elegantly expresseth it z.) *That dare* run upon God, even on his neck, *upon the thick bosses of his Bucklers*; that dare kindle that fire, *that burnes to the lowest hell* a: Little doe these men think how infinite the wrath of God is: z Job 15. 25, 26. a Deut. 32. 22

Infinite I say in { Intension. Extension. Satisfaction.

First, it is infinite in *Intension*; *for who knoweth the power of thy anger*, saith *Moses* b; it passeth the apprehension of men and Angels: That which is spoken of the glory reserved for Saints, is as true of the wrath reserved for sinners; *Eye hath not seen it nor eare heard it, neither can it enter into the heart of man to conceive it* c: it must needs be so, being the anger of an infinite God: A dart out of a weak mans arme will wound the body, but when it is shot out of a strong Bowe, and with a strong arme, then it wounds deeply: How infinite then will that wrath be, which seizeth on *Vessels of wrath*? When b Psal. 90. 11. c 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Mountaines and Mil-ſtones, of vengeance ſhall be throwne upon them, and that by an omnipotent hand and outſtretched arme, and fury poured out.

Secondly, it is infinite in *Extenſion* or *Duration*; it extends to all eternity; for the wrath of God is the very fuell that feeds the fire of hell (*the breath of the Lord like a ſtreame of brimſtone doth kindle it* [d]) now, that fire is an eternall fire [e]; ſo long as God ſhall be God, ſo long ſhall that fire burne, and that is for ever; yea (if it were poſſible) more then ever, even evermore.

d Iſa. 30.33.
e Jude ver. 7.

Thirdly, it is infinite in *Satisfaction*: Nothing can ſatisfie or appeaſe that anger but an infinite price, even the *precious blood* [f] of Jeſus Chriſt; which being the blood of a perſon that is God as well as man, is therefore called, *The blood of God*, Acts 20.28.

f 1 Pet. 1. 19.

Hearken therefore thou poore miſerable mortall worme, that makeſt it a ſmall matter to kindle the infinite wrath of that God who is a *conſuming fire* [g].

g Heb. 12.29.

Know thus much, if God be angry, Angels ſtoop, Devils tremble, the Earth melts, and the very Heavens are rowled up as a ſcrowle of parchment: *Who can ſtand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceneſſe of his anger? his fury is poured forth like fire, and the rocks are throwne downe before him* [h]: And if the denouncing or menacing of *Temporall* judgements be ſo dreadfull, what will the ſuffering of *Eternall* judgements be? What will it be to ſuffer the vengeance *of eternall fire?* Thou art now ready to fancy to thy ſelfe, a God made all of mercy and compaſſion; but if thou ſaw but the ſhadow of Gods wrath on a damned ſoule in hell, it would make thy heart ake, thy joynts quake, and rottenneſſe enter into thy bones.

h Nah. 1.6.

2 *Inſtruction.* The ſecond Inſtruction is this; ſee the hatefull, hurtfull, dividing, divorcing nature of ſin, which ſets God and his people at variance; *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God* [i].

i Iſa. 59.2.

Sin

Sin in this respect is far worse then any crosse or calamity that can befall us; it is worse then sword or famine or pestilence, or sorrow, or sickness, or poverty, or persecution: For afflictions doe not seperate us from God: *I am perswaded* (saith the Apostle [k]) *that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to seperate us from the love of God:* But sin can doe us that mischiefe, which neither crosses nor losses, nor death, nor devil can doe. k Rom. 8,31.

Whence is it then that we hug this Viper in our bosomes? Oh that our eyes were open to see sin as God sees it, and then we should loath sin as God loaths it.

Secondly, here is something for exhortation. 2 *Use, Exhortation.*

This Doctrine hints to us these two Duties.

First, learne to justifie the Lord in all his threatnings and executions. 1 *Duty.*

Give him the glory of his justice in all his Administrations.

The Lord has of late been sore displeased with this Nation; He hath frowned on us in his anger, yea, he ha's so roared, that he ha's made the whole Land to tremble: *He ha's shewed his people heavy things, he ha's made us drink the Wine of astonishment* [l]: But in the midst of all these sad signes and symptomes of God's displeasure, the Lord may say to us as he said to *Jerusalem*; [m] *thy way and thy doings have procured these things unto thee:* and we may say to God as *Ezra* doth in his penitentiall Lamentation; [n] *Now O our God, what shall we say after all this? for we have forsaken thy Commandements:* As if he should say, We can neither accuse thy severity, nor excuse our owne iniquity. l Psal 60.3. m Jer. 4.18. n Ezra 9.10.

God delights not in thundering threats, nor breaking blowes, nor severe proceedings against his people; *He doth not afflict willingly* [o], *or from his heart*, as the Hebrew phrase carries it; shewing mercy is his proper work, *Judgement is his strange work* [p]; therefore when he comes in a way of judgement, he is said to *come forth out of his place* [q], implying thus much; o Lam. 3.33. p Isa. 28,21. q Micah 1.3.

That

That then he is in the place that he delights in, when he ſits in the Mercy-ſeat [r].

r Micah 7.18.

Ye read of a ſhaving Razor wherewith God threatens his people, *Iſa.* 7.20. but the Prophet tels ye, it is a *Razor that is hired*, as if God had no Razor of his owne, he delights not to have it or to uſe it.

It is *Bernards* obſervation, that God is called *Pater miſericordiarum*, the Father of mercies, becauſe mercy naturally proceeds from him, and is willingly beſtowed; but he is never called *Pater vindictæ*, the Father of revenge, becauſe that is unwillingly inflicted: Look as Bees give honey naturally and ſting onely when they are provoked; ſo it is with God, ſweetneſſe flowes from his inward diſpoſition, harſhneſſe onely from outward provocation; therefore complaine not of God or his indignation, let us complaine of our ſelves, and of our own provocations.

2 *Duty.* Secondly, we may by this Doctrine learne this duty, *viz.* To tremble at Gods direfull denunciations: *If the Lyon roar, all the Beaſts of the Forreſt tremble:* Shall God be angry, and ſhall not we feare and fall downe before him? Shall God threaten both by his Word and by his Works? His Word ſpecifying what judgements we have deſerved; his works of ſeverity on others, telling us what we may juſtly expect for our miſcarriages; and ſhall not this threatning awake us? ſhall his Rods be not onely ſhaken over us, but waſted on us and yet we ſtiffen our necks and harden our hearts againſt his feare? God forbid: *Feare ye not me, ſaith the Lord? will ye not tremble at my preſence, that have placed the Sand for the bound of the Sea by a perpetuall decree, that it cannot paſſe it?* [s] Feare ye not my Word? Feare ye not my Rod? This is certaine, the more we triumph in proſperity, the more we ſhall tremble in adverſity; the leſſe we feare Gods Rod, the more we ſhall feel it, either here or hereafter.

s Jer.5.22.

3 *Uſe, for Imitation.* Thirdly, this Doctrine may be improved for imitation both to

{ Miniſters and
{ Magiſtrates.

Firſt,

First, Miniſters by Gods own example, may threaten impenitent ſinners.

They may *come with a rod*, as well as *in love, and in the ſpirit of meekneſſe* [t]; they may be ſharp in reproving ſin, foretelling danger, and denouncing judgements: When the wicked are brazen fac'd in ſinning, Miniſters may be as brazen fac'd in reproving: *Behold* (ſaith God to *Ezekiel* [v]) *I have made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy forehead ſtrong againſt their foreheads; feare them not, neither be diſmayed at their looks:* We may ſpit fire and vengeance in the faces of obſtinate and unreformed ſinners.

t 1 Cor. 4:21.

v Ezek. 3.8.

Let no man ſlight this way as too legall, crying out *Theſe are legall Preachers*, &c. For our Saviour himſelfe trod in the ſame path, denouncing dreadfull woes againſt impenitent ſinners: [x] *Woe unto thee* Chorazin, *woe unto thee* Bethſaida, *woe unto you Scribes and Phariſes, Hypocrites*; which is ſeven times repeated in one chapter [y]: And where doe you meet with a more terrible ſoule-ſhaking Commination, then that of our Saviour in the ſame Chapter? ver. 33. *Yee Serpents, ye generation of Vipers, How can yee eſcape the damnation of hell?* Look upon Saint *Paul's* manner of preaching; though there was never any Miniſter of Chriſt more Evangelicall then he, yet he could ſpeak to ſinners as a *Son of thunder*, as well as in a *ſtill voice*: Did he not thunder and lighten when he made *Felix* tremble [z]? Does he not tell ſinners of the *terrour of the Lord* *? and the dreadfulneſſe of his wrath? That *he ſhall come in flaming fire to take vengeance on all them that know not God, and obey not the Goſpell of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And that ſuch *ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power* [a].

x Mat. 11.21.

y Mat. 23.13, &c.

z Acts 24. 25.

* 2 Cor. 5.11.

a 2 Theſ. 1.8. 19.

Can Miniſters have a better pattern for their Preaching and practice then holy *Paul*, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelfe?

Secondly, for *Magiſtrates*, Gods Vice-gerents here on earth; they may and muſt ſhew their juſt indignation againſt offenders and offences.

When God hath put authority into your hands: Firſt,

b Neh. 13. 21. ye must *threaten* offenders; thus did *Nehemiah*; he b testified against Sabbath-breakers, and said unto them, *Why lodge ye about the wall? If ye doe so againe, I will lay hands on you:* It may please God your threatning may prevaile to prevent much sin, as *Nehemiah's* did: But if threatning will doe no good, then ye must proceed to *Act* what ye speak; thus did he to obstinate and unreformed sinners; *I contended with them* (saith c Neh. 13. 25. he c) *and cursed them*; that is, pronounced a curse against them that had taken strange Wives; yea, *I pluckt off their haire, and made them sweare by God* to reforme what was amisse. Nay, for your encouragement, ye have a greater then *Nehemiah*, to be a pattern to you, in the execution of Justice upon Delinquents; ye have God himselfe for your example; for see d Zech. 1. 6. what God speaks by the Prophet *Zacharie* d, *My words and my Statutes which I commanded my servants the Prophets, did they not take hold of your Fathers?* What he pronounced in a way of commination, he made good in a way of execution. *The* * Psal. 9. 16. *Lord is knowne by the judgement that he executeth* *. It is true, He threatens before he strikes, but he will strike as wel as threaten: so must ye do likewise.

The Magistrates sword must not be like a *George on Horseback*, alwayes threatning, never striking; *for he is the Minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evill;* e Rom. 13. 4. *therefore he must not beare the sword in vaine* e. But where headstrong Obstinacy is added to grosse Impiety, he must act with just severity, in suppressing sinne and sinners, *Turning the* f Pro. 23. 26. *wheele upon the wicked* f, and cutting off those rotten members that are incurable.

But I use all this heat to the inflaming of your zeale; for no other end, then what was Gods end in my Text, *The sinners reformation.* And this lets me in to the consideration of the third and last point which I propounded to yee, which is this:

Doctr. 3. *Gods dreadfull Comminations against sinne and sinners, call for a speedy Repentance and reformation.*

First, they call for a Reformation: *Wilt thou not be made cleane?* Secondly,

Secondly, for a ſpeedy Reformation: *When will it once be?* For the proofe of this Point, the Scripture is abundantly plaine and pregnant. When God had threatned a dreadfull Judgement againſt his people, ſaying, *Thus will I doe to thee O Iſrael* [g]; that is, I will deale with thee according to thy deſerts; *I will take you away with hookes, and your poſterity with fiſh-hookes* [h]. Hee makes this uſe of this ſad Doctrine; *Becauſe I will doe thus unto thee, Prepare to meet thy God, O Iſrael:* Meet me by repentance and Reformation, and meet me ſpeedily, leſt it be too late [i]. Doe in this caſe as a King doth going to warre; If he have but ten thouſand to meet his enemy that comes againſt him with twenty thouſand, *he ſends an embaſſage, and deſires conditions of peace* [k]. So doe thou; If thou be not able to match me by thy power (which is impoſſible; for, *How can thine heart endure, or thine hands be ſtrong, in the day that I ſhall deale with thee* [l]?) then meet me by thy penitentiall Reformation; ſend prayers, and teares, and ſighes, and groanes that cannot be expreſſed: ſend a deepe deteſtation of ſinne, a freſh indignation againſt ſinne, a renewed Reſolution to forſake ſinne; ſend theſe (I ſay) as Ambaſſadours to deſire conditions of peace, leſt *I breake thee with breach upon breach, and run upon thee like a Gyant* [m]. And what meanes the Prophet *Iſaiah* by that quicke and ſmart ſpeech of his [n]? *If ye will enquire, enquire ye, returne, come:* as if he ſhould ſay, What ye doe in the buſineſſe of Repentance, doe quickly; as *Moſes* ſaid to *Aaron* in the like caſe [o], *Take a Cenſer and put fire therein, and Incenſe thereon, and goe quickely unto the Congregation, and make an attonement for them.* We may ſee the evidence of this truth in the grounds of it.

For firſt, the exerciſe of Gods patience, though it be long-laſting, it will not be ever-laſting: *My ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man* [p], ſaith God, concerning the ſinners before the flood. The ſpirit may ſtrive a great while with ſtubborne unreformed wretches, but he will not be alwayes ſtriving: God patience may ſometimes be ſo tyred out, that he may ſay of a people, as the Prophet *Jeremie* did of the Jewes in his time; [q] *The Lord could no longer heare, becauſe of the evill*

Reaſon 1.

g Amos 4. 12.

h Ver 2.

i *Currat pœnitentia ne præcurrat ſententia.*

k Luke 14. 31. 32.

l Ezek. 22. 14.

m Job 16. 14.

n Iſa. 21. 12.

o Num. 16. 46.

p Gen. 6. 3.

q Jer. 44. 22.

evill of your doings, and becauſe of the abominations which ye have committed. He may ſometimes be ſo preſſed (*even as a Cart is preſſed under ſheaves* [r]) that the axle-tree of his patience may be broken, and then *He ſhall be ſuddenly conſumed that would not be ſpeedily reformed* [s]. Nay yet more, Gods patience may ſometimes be ſo abuſed, that he may be angry with his owne children, and ſay to them as our Saviour ſaid to his Diſciples, [t] *How long ſhall I be with you?* How long ſhall I ſuffer you?

r Amor 2. 13.

s *Subitò tollitur, qui diù toleratur.*

t Mat. 17. 17.

Reaſon 2. Secondly, Reformation ſhould prevent Deſolation; Becauſe God had rather have his Judgements prevented then inflicted. Hence it is, that He threatens deſtruction that he may not deſtroy us; *Behold, I frame evill againſt you* (ſaith the Lord) *and deviſe a device againſt you; Returne ye now every one from his wicked way, and make your wayes and your doings good* [v].

v Jer. 18. 11.

Reaſon 3. Thirdly, delayes in Repentance are exceeding dangerous. The habits of ſinne are more ſtrengthned; the powers and faculties of the Soule are more weakned and wounded; and God himſelfe is more provoked to *give up a people to their owne hearts luſt* [w]: to give them over as deſperate and incurable, and to ſay in his juſt anger and indignation, [x] *He that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill.* When *Jeruſalem* became as a boyling pot, whoſe great ſcumme went not forth out of her; (judgements would not mollifie her nor bring her to repentance) the Lord is extreamly angry, and tels her plainly, [y] *Becauſe I have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged; thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſſe any more, till I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee.* Oh how doleſull and deſperate is ſuch a Condition! which of us doe not trembles at the apprehenſion of it?

w Pſal. 81. 12

x Rev. 22. 11.

y Ezek. 24. 13.

Now this Doctrine may be thus improved:

3 Uſe of Reprehenſion, or Complaint. Firſt, It frames a Bill of Indictement againſt us, who have had warning after warning, threatning upon threatning, blow after Blow, yet are an impenitent and unreformed people to this day.

Hath not God trained us up in the *Schoole of Inſtruction* for many yeeres together? No Nation under heaven ha's had

ſo

ſo many faithfull Watchmen, ſo many painfull, powerfull Preachers as *England* ha's had. No people upon earth ha's lived under ſuch ſweet ſhowers and ſunſhine of the glorious Goſpell of *Chriſt* as we have done.

Hath not God trained us up in the *Schoole of Correction?* Somtimes he ha's come with the Beeſome of *Peſtilence*, which ha's ſwept away thouſands, and ten thouſands in our ſtreets; ſometimes he hath ſmitten us with *blaſting and mildew*, dearth of corne, and *cleanneſſe of teeth*, in many places of the Kingdome; and to goe no further, we now lye under a ſharp Iron whip, a *bloody unnaturall inteſtine warre*, which ha's made the whole Land to tremble; we have been a moath-eaten Kingdome almoſt twenty yeers together, for ſtill we were waſting and declining, but in theſe four laſt yeers God ha's bin as a Lyon tearing us to pieces, *Hoſea* 5. 12, 14. Alas, alas! Our young men have been ſlain with the edge of the ſword, our Widowes have bewailed the loſſe of their husbands, our Orphans have bewailed the loſſe of their Parents, and *h' ſtink of our Camps have come up into our noſtrils* [z]: We have had ſad and mournfull meſſages, of Villages plundered, houſes fired, Brethren impriſoned, Women abuſed, eſtates devoured, whole Counties waſted; yet after all theſe verball and reall warnings, after all this ſorrow and ſmart, and wrath, and blood, our droſſe and ſcumme is not taken away, our leproſies yet abide upon us; there is yet as much ſwearing and lying, deceiving and diſſembling, as much pride and covetouſneſſe, ſelf-ſeeking and ſelf-confidence, diſcord and diſſention among Brethren, as there was before the warre began; ſo that God may juſtly and angrily ſpeak to *England* as he doth to *Jeruſalem* in the Text, *Wilt thou not be made clean? when will it once be?* Yea, the Lord may juſtly take up that complaint of us, which he doth of the *Jewes* in *Jeremiah's* time; [a] *They are Braſſe and Iron* (baſe and droſſie mettall, good for nothing) *the bellowes are burnt* (the lungs of my meſſengers are ſpent with ſpeaking to them) *the Lead is conſumed of the fire, the Founder melteth in vain, for their wickedneſſes are not plucked away*, (all the paines and labour that hath been ſpent

z Amos 4, 10.

a Ier. 6. 28-30.

about refining of them is loſt;) *Therefore reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them, becauſe the Lord hath rejected them.*

Bluſh O Heavens, and ſtand amazed O Earth, that a people ſhould have ſo many inſtructions, corrections, warnings and awakenings, woundings and breaking blowes, yet ſhould remaine ſo unreformed! God ſpeaks in anger, yet we heare not; roares from Heaven, yet we feare not; ſmites us with his rod, yet we feele not; yea, ſtroke upon ſtroke, yet we lay it not to heart: For this ſhould our eyes drop downe teares, and we ſhould in the bitterneſſe of our ſpirits cry out with *Ezra*, [b] *Behold O Lord, we are before thee this day in our treſpaſſes, for we cannot ſtand before thee becauſe of this.*

b Ezra 9.15.

2 *Uſe, Exhortation.* In the ſecond place, let a word of Exhortation take hold on your hearts, (and what I preach to others, the Lord grant I may practice in my owne ſoule) Let us ſtudy a particular Reformation in our hearts and houſes; let us doe as God adviſeth *Jeruſalem*; [c] *O Jeruſalem waſh thine heart from wickedneſſe, that thou mayeſt be ſaved:* Let every one of us doe as *Jacob* did, when God called upon him to pay his vowes, which he made in the dayes of his diſtreſſe, *Gen.* 35.2. *Then Jacob ſaid unto his houſhold, and to all that were with him, Put away the ſtrange Gods that are among you, and be cleane, and change your garments.* Oh that *Joſhuah's* reſolution were fixed and faſtned on the hearts of all that heare me this day! [d] *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord.* The City would ſoone be cleane, if every man would ſweep at his own doore.

c Jer.4.14.

d Joſh.24.15.

Motives. Thinke with your ſelves therefore, that ye ſee God *waiting that he may be gracious to you* [e]. He waits till ye meet him with repentance, that he may meet you with deliverance. If ye were but fitted for mercy, he would beſtow a full mercy on you. Thinke that ye heare him this day wooing, intreating, inviting, beſeeching you to come in, and ſtand out no longer, *We are Ambaſſadours for Chriſt, as if God did beſeech you by us, &c* [f]. O admirable and unheard of condeſcention, that the Ceator ſhould beſeech the creature, that the King of eternity, whoſe *glory is lifted up above the heavens* [g], ſhould intreat wormes and duſt to be reconciled.

e Iſa.30.18.

f 2 Cor.5.20.

g Pſal.8.1.

Nay

Nay yet more, Looke on God not onely intreating, but expostulating or reasoning the case with you, as he doth with *Ephraim* [h], *O Ephraim what shall I do unto thee? O England* how shall I deale with thee? Have ye beene uncleane, and will ye be so still? Are your former iniquities and provocations (before the warre began) too little for you, but that you will adde iniquity to iniquity, and rebellion to rebellion? As the tribes of *Israel* reasoned in the like case; [i] *Is the iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not clensed untill this day; but that ye must turne away from following the Lord, and make him wroth with the whole Congregation?*

h Hos. 6. 4.

i Josh. 22. 17, 18.

Lastly, looke upon God not onely expostulating with you, but also lamenting your folly and losse; [k] *O that thou hadst harkned to my Commandements! then had thy peace beene as a river, and thy righteousnesse as the waves of the Sea.* It is *Chrysostoms* observation upon my Text, that when God was now about to punish them, he do's pitty them [l]; he do's as it were weep over them, and compassionately mourne for them; *When, O when will it once be?* just as a tender-hearted father that ha's but one Sonne, and that Sonne untoward and untractable, he takes the Rod into his hand, but withall he ha's teares in his eyes, saying, How shall I scourge thee my Son? *How shall I give thee up* (to Ruine) *O Ephraim! How shall I deliver thee* (into the hand of thine enemies) *O Israel? How shall I make thee as* Admah? *how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, and my repentings are kindled together* *?

k Isa. 48. 18.

l Επὶ τοῖς κολαζομένοις αὐτοῖς, ἀλγεῖ κ' θρηνεῖ καὶ ἐλεεῖ, *Chryso. in locum.*

* Hos. 11. 8.

Doth all this nothing move us, nothing melt us? Are we in love with wrath, and death, and danger? Are we willing to perish? to be made a *hissing*, a *reproach*, and an *astonishment* to all other Nations? Know ye not that one sin unrepented, unreformed will doe us more mischiefe then all our enraged Enemies can doe us? One sinne in forcing the *Levites* Concubine to death (it is one of the saddest Stories that ye meet with in all the Scriptures) occasioned the slaughter of LXV. THOUSAND MEN [m]; and that is more (I beleeve) then the sword hath devoured in this Kingdome these three yeeres. Know ye not that without Reformation there

m Judges 20.

there will be no *Pacification*? Ye read in *Isa.*9.12.that though the *Syrians* before, and the *Philistines* behinde had devoured *Israel* with open mouth, *yet Gods anger was not turned away but his hand was stretched out still.* But why would not God be pacified after all that calamity which fell upon them? the reason followes, verse 13. *For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither doe they seeke the Lord of hosts.* So long as we have a rebellious hand to stretch out against God, so long will God have a revenging hand to stretch out against us: If he doe not bend us, he will breake us. Nay yet more, without Reformation, we can expect nothing but a desolation, *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem* (saith God [n]) *lest my soule depart from thee* (or be dislocated from thee, as the Hebrew phrase emphatically expresseth it [o]) *lest I make thee desolate, a Land not inhabited.* Observe here, though a people be as neere to God as the Arme is to the shoulder-blade, yet if they doe not heare the rod, and learne instruction, and be reformed, Hee will be loosed or dislocated from them, cut them off from his hand, and make them desolate. And tell me (Sirs) are ye willing to tyre out Gods patience that do's preserve you? when ye stand but upon one bough of a tree, (Gods forbearance or long-suffering) which bough if it were broken or cut downe, ye should fall into all woe and misery, both here and hereafter, Are ye willing to cut down that bough? Will ye *observe lying vanities, and forsake your owne mercy* [p]? Will ye provoke God to say in his displeasure, *I will stretch out my hand against thee and destroy thee; I am weary with repenting* [q]? Oh give God leave to glorifie his name in your Reformation, rather then in your ruine and desolation.

n Ier.6.8.

o פֶּן־תִּקַּע

p Ionah 2.8.

q Ier.15.6.

Quest. It may be you will say unto me, What is that Reformation that is required, and so earnestly pressed upon us this day?

Answ. I answer briefly, It is the purging away of whatsoever doth defile the Soule.

As { Errour in opinion. / Inordinacy of Affection. / Sinfulnesse in Conversation.

For

For the first, Doe ye thinke Errours in judgement small matters, or trifles not to be regarded? Know ye not that they are exceeding

{Dangerous in their Nature.
{Damnable in their Effects.

First, they are *dangerous*, because they bewitch the Soule: *O foolish* Galatians, *who ha's bewitched you that you should not obey the truth* [r]; yea, they corrupt and defile the soule: *I feare* (saith the Apostle [s]) *least your mindes should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*: Errours and Idolatries agree in this, they are both of them the defilements of the conjugall Bed; they make professors turne Strumpets, and cease to be loyall Spouses of Jesus Christ: Yea moreover, they hinder the growth of grace in the soule; as the worme at the root of the tree hinders the growth of the tree, or weeds sprouting up with the corne, hinder the growth of the corne: Hence is errour compared to a *Canker or Gangrene* [t] which consumes the flesh; so doth errour consume or eat out the heart of grace: Oh that sad experience did not set seale to this truth! but we see it daily (and may grieve for what we see;) That many Christians, who formerly have bin forward professors, & haue seen some beauty in spirituall things, *and tasted of the heavenly gift*, yet when once they are caught in this snare of errour, they lose the savour of grace, and fearfully fall either from the profession, or from the power of godlinesse.

[r] Gal. 3. 1.
[s] 2 Cor. 11. 3.
[t] 2 Tim. 2. 17

Secondly, they are *damnable* in their effects: For it is well observed by Divines [v], That corruption in judgement is as bad, nay worse, then corruption in manners, especially where the mind ha's been enlightned with the knowledge of the truth. Leprosie in the head was of all other Leprosies the most dangerous and destructive: [w] *The Priest shall pronounce him* utterly *uncleane* (saith the Lord) *his plague is in his head*: He was uncleane if he had the Leprosie in his hand or feet; but if it were in his head, then he was utterly unclean. Looke as the Soule is the excellency of man, so the intellectuall part is the excellency of the Soule; It is the *Candle of*

[v] Master *Hilderſam* on Pſ. 51. p. 704. and others.
[w] Lev. 13. 44.

Pro. 20. 27. *the Lord*, as *Solomon* cals it [s]; a light set up to direct the whole man in the way that he should walke in: Now as our Saviour reasons in the like case, *If the light that is in thee be darkenesse, how great is that darkenesse* [t]? So here, if the minde and judgement be corrupted, how great is that corruption? In God's feare therefore, let all errours be avoyded, as *Satans snares* (for so the Apostle cals them [v]) wherein he entangles the understandings of seduced men.

[s] Mat. 6. 23.

[v] 2 Tim. 2. 26

For the second, viz. *Inordinacy of Affection*; such as sinfull feares, sensuall delights, carnall contentment, creature-confidence, selfe-love and selfe-seeking, earthly mindednesse, *and the like*; they must all be renounced, if we our selves would be reformed. It is a golden Rule of the Apostle (the Lord give us hearts to walke by it) in 1 *Cor.* 7. 30, 31. *Let them that weepe be as though they wept not, and they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not over-using it* [w]. When a Picture is pasted to a wall, if you offer to plucke it away, you teare it in peeces; but if you set it in a frame, you may remove it as you please: So, when our hearts are glewed to creature-comforts, we lose our hearts in the use of them, and teare our hearts in parting with them; But, if our hearts be set in a holy frame of spirituall Moderation, we shall neither *over-joy* them, while we have them; nor *over-grieve* when we come to want them.

[w] ὡς μὴ κατα-χρώμενοι, *Rerum fluxarum immoderatum usum damnat*, Beza in locum.

For the third, viz. *Sinfulnesse of conversation*: This must be abandoned; It is not enough to bewaile the Sinnes that ye have committed, but ye must also forsake the sinnes that ye have bewayled; *He that confesseth and forsaketh his sinnes shall finde mercy* [x]. All *Grosse* sinnes must be forsaken in practice; *Let them not be once named among ye, as becommeth Saints* [y]. See Isa. 30. 22 The *least* sinnes (even sinnes of thought) must be forsaken both in Affection by *loathing* of them, and in Resolution by *striving* against them; *cleaving unto God with full purpose of heart* [z]; and *hating every false way* [a].

[x] Pro. 28. 13.

[y] Ephes. 5. 3.

[z] Acts 11. 23.

[a] Ps. 119. 128

Quest But how, or by what Meanes may the worke of Reformation be carried on, both in publick and private, in Church

Church and State, in our hearts and houſes?

Anſw Let us carefully and conſciencioully make uſe of theſe Meanes:

First, let us be *humbled to the duſt for our former failings*; and particularly that our Spirits have not been *upright or ſtedfaſt* with our God; that we have not *payd the Vowes which we made unto him in the day of trouble*: Like little children, while we were under the rod, we made faire promiſes; but the rod (in a great meaſure) is removed, and yet we are not reformed. 1 *Helpe.*

Secondly, *Looke often on our Covenant*, and take heed of breaking with that God who *keepes Covenant* with us, [b] and accurately eyeth and obſerveth al the juglings of our hearts. Who among us doe not tremble at the ſtory of *Zedekiah*, of whom God ſpeakes thus (after he had broke his Covenant which he had made with *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* [c]) *ſhall Zedekiah proſper? ſhall he eſcape that doth ſuch things? or ſhall he breake the Covenant and be delivered?* No, *even in the midſt of Babilon ſhall he dye.* 2 *Helpe.* [b] Neh. 1. 5. [c] Ezek. 7. 15 16.

Memorable is the ſtory of *Vladiſlaus* King of *Hungary* [d], who having made a League with *Amurath* the *Turkiſh* Emperour for ten yeeres; upon the perſwaſion of a Cardinall called *Julian*, who abſolved him from his Oath; he brake his League: Hereupon comming to fight againſt *Amurath*, He for a while prevailed, and had like to have got the victory; but *Amurath* ſeeing the great ſlaughter of his men, plucked the writing out of his boſome, wherein the League was contained, and holding it in his hand with his eyes lift up to heaven, ſaid; *Behold thou crucified Chriſt, This is the League that thy Chriſtians in thy Name made with me, and now have violated; If thou be God (as they ſay thou art) Avenge the wrong done to thy Name and unto me*: Inſtantly after, in the very ſame Battell was *Vladiſlaus*, that had broke the League, ſlaine, and his Head carried on the poynt of a Launce through their Cities, as a token of the *Turkes* Trophee. Now is it ſo dreadfull a ſinne to breake Covenant with men; What is it to breake Covenant with that God, who *can caſt Soule and Body into* [d] Turkiſh Hiſtory, p. 297.

into hell fire? Certainly, if we breake our Covenant, our Covenant will breake us.

3 *Helpe.* Thirdly, Let us *get more publicknesse of spirit*, to say with the
e Psal.137.5. Psalmist, e *If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.* Let all private interests be drowned in publick concernments; looke as when publicke men have a private spirit, it is a great curse unto a Kingdome; so when private men have a publick spirit, it is a great blessing: let that be
f Acts 13. 36. our honour which was *Davids*, f *to serve our generation:* to be be usefull in the times and places whereinto God ha's cast us.

4 *Helpe.* Fourthly, *Study unity and unanimity*, that in the cause of God and Gospell ye may all have one heart, and one hand, and one minde, and one mouth: Doe as the Tribes of *Is-*
g Judg.20 8. *rael* did in a publicke cause, g *They all arose as one man.* Sure it is, there is not one plot or project wherein the Devill more labours or bestirs himselfe, then this, How he may cast in a bone of Division, blow the coles of contention, and breake the band of unity among Brethren: Therefore looke how farre any man nourisheth the spirit of discord and dissention in his brest, so farre (I dare tell him from the Lord) he is Instrumentall to the Devill: Boards joyned together make a Ship, disioyned, they cause Shipwracke: Agreement among Christians builds up *Jerusalem*, disagreement puls it downe: In the building of *Solomons* Temple, there was no noyse; *neither hammer, nor axe, nor any toole of iron was heard*
b 1 Kings 6.7 *while it was in building* h: O that in setting up the building of Reformation (*for which we have lift up our hands to the most high God*) there might be no noyse of jars or janglings, crossings or thwartings, envyings or hart-burnings.

5 *Helpe.* Lastly, *Get your hearts fired with a burning love to Christ*, and an enflamed zeale for his honour, and advancement of the worke of Reformation, that ye may be *fervent in spirit* i;
i ζεοντες, seething hot, Rom.12.11. *a peculiar people zealous of good workes* k: and remember this for your encouragement; If every thought of your hearts
k Tit.2.14. were a rapture, and every word an extasie, and every action a sacrifice; If ye had a thousand lives to spend for Christ,

and

and ten thousand estats to lay down at his feet; If ye *did spend and were spent* in his service, He is able abundantly to recompence you both here and hereafter; *Your labour shall not be in vaine in the Lord* [l].

l 1 Cor. 15. 38

To draw to a conclusion.

Particular Application to the Members of the Honourable House.

Let me winde up the three Doctrins on one Bottome, and so addresse my speech to you (Noble SENATORS) whom God ha's honoured, and betrusted with so great a Worke, as the steering of our Ship in a storme, and the setling of a poore tottering, trembling Kingdome: Ye have heard,

That God { *See's all our Provocations* [a]. a 1 *Point.* / *Breath's out against us his comminations* [b]. b 2 *Point.* / *Cal's aloud for speedy Reformation* [c]. c 3 *Point.* }

I beseech you as a poore Messenger of Jesus Christ, lay these things to heart, and apply them to your owne Soules.

For example: First, Do's God see all your wayes with an impartiall eye? (*for he accepts not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poore* [m]:) Then give me leave to propound that question to you which the Prophet *Oded* did to the men of Israel, 2 Cro. 28. 10. *Are there not with you, even with you, sinnes against the Lord your God?* I come not hither, either to *accuse* or to *censure* any of you: (There is a witnesse *within* you will doe the one; there is a Judge *above* you, will doe the other:) But ye will suffer me to intreat you, to *Beseech you by the Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering to him at that great day*, To be true to your owne spirits, to look into your owne hearts, and to watch over your own wayes, that ye give no occasion to the Lord to say, *I have seene the provocations* of these or these Parliament men.

m Job 34. 19.

Take heed therefore, lest (by the dignity of your places) *your hearts be lifted up above your Brethren*: and remember, the greater your places are, the greater must your reckoning be.

Be carefull ὀρθοποδεῖν (to use the Apostles phrase [n]) to tread with a straight foot, *to walke uprightly according to the truth of the Gospell*: Remember that speech of *Job*, [o] *Thou look'st narrowly to all my paths, thou settest a print upon the heeles of my*

n Gal. 2. 14.

o Job 13. 27.

feet. If ye doe but tread awry, or ſtep out of that way that God hath appointed you to walke in; *Shall not God ſearch this out? for he knowes the ſecrets of the heart?* p

p Pſal. 44. 21.

Let there be none among you, that drive on your owne particular deſignes, and ſerve God and his cauſe no further, then they ſerve your owne ends and intereſts: Do not ſpare thoſe whom God would not have ſpared; (It coſt *Ahab* dear when he ſpared *Benhadad* q; God tels him, *Thy life ſhall goe for his life, and thy people for his people.*) Doe not diſcourage thoſe whom God would not have diſcouraged.

q 1 Kings 20. 42.

Beware leſt out of Cowardize or carnall feares, out of ſinfull complyance and conformity to the wils of men, ye TOLERATE what God would not have TOLERATED; for I conceive it worthy the conſideration of the wiſeſt, whether the Devill would not thinke he had made a good bargaine, and gained well by the Reformation, if he could exchange the *Prelacie* for an *Vniverſall Liberty*.

Take heed, leſt there be any found among you, that are zealous for vindicating *Civill Liberties*, but when Church-government comes to be ſetled, ye ſhrinke and ſtart, and withdraw the ſhoulder, as being afraid of a Reformation that will be too ſtrict.

Ye have of late cauſed the Scriptures to be ſearched, deſiring that the minde of Chriſt *in point of government*, and what *therein* will beare the ſtampe of divine Authority, may be repreſented to you: And ye have done exceeding well in this matter; the Lord of heaven proſper you in your proceedings; But let me put you in minde of a ſad Story that ye meet with in this Propheſie, *Jerem.* 42. The people come to the Prophet very demurely, r Deſiring that *God would ſhew them the way wherein they ſhould walke, and what he would have them doe*, and they make a ſolemn profeſſion and proteſtation, *ver.* 5. *The Lord be a true and faithfull witneſſe betweene us, if we doe not even according to all things, for the which the Lord thy God ſhall ſend thee to us.* Well, the Prophet do's inquire, and brings them a Meſſage that they doe not like, ver. 10. viz. *That they ſhould abide in the Land of Judah, and not goe downe to Egypt.* What

r Jer. 42. 3, 5.

ſay

ſay they to this Meſſage? You may ſee Chap. 43. 2. They are extreamly angry with the Prophet, and give him the *lye* to his face; *Thou ſpeakeſt falſly; The Lord our God hath not ſent thee to ſay, Goe not into Egypt to ſojourne there.* Whereupon the Prophet tels them plainly, Chap. 42. 20. *Ye diſſembled in your hearts when ye ſent me to the Lord to inquire for you.*

Obſerve here, If the Prophets counſell had ſuited with their owne Principles, ends and intereſts, then they would have followed his advice: but becauſe it did not, they ſcornfully reject it.

Now God forbid that there ſhould be any among You that ſhould thus double and diſſemble with God in your inquiry; But if there be any ſuch among ye, or if this or any of theſe ſecret ſinnes before named, doe cleave to your hearts or lives; I teſtifie to you in the preſence of God, what *Moſes* did to the Reubenites [s]; *Behold, yee have ſinned againſt the Lord, and be ſure your ſinne will finde you out.* [s] Nch. 32. 23.

Againe: Doe our ſinnes yet threaten us with a Woe? Then let me beſeech you (Honourable and Beloved) ſtudy to be ſo many *Moſeſes* to *ſtand in the breach* [t], between God's wrath and a ſinfull people. I know it is Chriſt alone that can doe this *meritoriouſly* (for *Moſes* in this was a type of Chriſt) but ye may doe it inſtrumentally, as *Phinehas* did by executing judgement, Numb. 25. 11. *Phinehas the ſonne of Eleazar, hath turned away my wrath from the children of Iſrael, while he was zealous for my ſake among them.* [t] Pſal. 106. 23

Shall I ſpeake my feares to you? Truly I feare, Though God has brought us to the skirts of *Canaan*, to the Havenmouth of our deliverance, yet we are ſtill ſo unreformed, that we lye under that Woe which is denounced againſt the *Cherethites* [v], viz. *That the word of the Lord is againſt us*; even that word which I ſpake of before in Iſa. 8. 12, 13. *His anger is not turned away, becauſe we turne not to him that ſmites us.* Now if the Word of God be againſt us, it is more then if *France*, and *Spaine*, and *Germanie* and all *Chriſtendome* were againſt us. [v] Zeph. 2. 5.

Therefore that Gods anger may be turned away by a ſpeedy

speedy Reformation; do ye endeavor to promote it with all your might; follow the example of that godly King *Hezekiah*, [w] *Whatever he did in the service of the house of God, and in the Law, and in the Commandements to seeke his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.* Say to that God who ha's beene your shield and buckler (to whom ye stand infinitely indebted and engaged) as *Elisha* did to the Shunamite [x]; *Behold, thou hast beene carefull for us with all this care* (in preserving us from the rage of those that rose up against us) *What is to be done for thee?*

w 2 Chro. 31 21.

x 2 Kin. 4. 13

Remember the eyes of the Kingdome are upon yee; nay, the eyes of all Christendome are upon ye, as a Parliament saved by the Lord, neere unto him in the bond of love, and the Bond of a Covenant. O did ye but live up to the height of your mercies and engagements, what a renowned Parliament would you be? Therefore *Doe wortbily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem* [y]? Think with your selves ye heare the whole Kingdome crying to you, as the man of *Macedonia* did to *Paul*, [z] *We are* desperately sicke with sinne as well as misery, *Come heale us, come helpe us.* Yee have the broome of Reformation in your hand; for the Lord *Jesus* sake doe something to cleanse us; sweepe the Church as well as the Commonwealth.

y Ruth 4. 11.

z Acts 16. 9.

To this end, take order *that Obstructions may removed*; ye in your wisdome can finde them out.

Take order that *Ministers may be encouraged* in their work: Thus did godly *Hezekiah*, [a] *He commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the Priests and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the Law of the Lord.* Let those that are faithfull have such *honourable* [b] maintenance, that their persons may be fenced from contempt: He spake as an Oracle in your House, that said, [c] *A scandalous maintenance is the cause of a scandalous Ministry.* Doe not starve the Nurse lest the Nurse starve the Childe. Let there not be one penny of that which is called the CHURCHES REVENEW, diverted to any other use, then for setting up of a godly conscientious Ministery, in those places especially, where

a 2 Chro 31. 4

b διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιώσαι. 1 Tim. 5. 17.

c Sir Ben. Rud.

the

the people are ready to periſh for lack of viſion, and (were they but ſenſible of their owne miſery) would cry out as the Priſoners at *Ludgate*, *Bread for the Lords ſake*, *Bread for the Lords ſake*.

TAKE ORDER *That errours and hereſies be diſcountenanced and ſuppreſſed*; ſtop the ſpreading of this Gangrene, before it over-run the whole body of the Kingdome: O that I might make it my requeſt to this honourable Senate on my bended knees, that ye would take ſome ſpeedy courſe to ſtop this Flood-gate leaſt we be drowned; for the Lord Jeſus ſake, ſhew us that favour that the earth did to the woman, when *the Serpent caſt water out of his mouth as a Flood*, to drown her, the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed up the flood [d]. d Reve. 12. 15 16.

TAKE ORDER *That our differences may be compounded.*

Here let me turne my Exhortation into a Lamentation; O that we had ſome mourning *Jeremie's*, that could doe as he did in this Chapter [e]; *My ſoule ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride* (for onely by pride comes all our contention [f]) *and mine eye ſhall weep ſore and run downe with teares*: O that we could quench this flame of contention with our teares! but ſince we cannot, Lord Jeſus doe thou quench it with thy blood. e Jer. 13. 17. f Pro. 13. 10.

As concerning the preſent difference lying before ye, I will not undertake to looſe that knot: Bleſſed be God, ye have an *Aſſembly* of as reverend, learned, pious judicious Divines to conſult with, as this preſent Age can afford: Onely let me beg two things at your hands; Beare with me, it is the firſt time that ever I ſpake to you in this place.

Firſt, *Be not jealous of your friends* that have ſtood by you, and ſtuck to you, and have ſtrengthened your hands in God as *Jonathan* did *Davids* in the day of his diſtreſſe [g]. g 1 Sam. 23. 16

Let us ſpeak our hearts to you: God and our conſciences will witneſſe for us, that we ſeek for *Purity* more then *Power*; and if Chriſts honour may be advanced, though in the ruine of our owne, we doe rejoyce and will rejoyce: In

briefe, if ye give us a power *more* then Christ gives us, it is our sin to accept it; if ye give us *lesse*, take heed least God be angry.

The second thing I beg is this, *Hasten a setling*: We know ye are going on, yet because the Church of Christ is running to confusion, beare with us if we be a litle impatient of delay, and cry out as *Sisera's* Mother did [h]; *Why is the Charet so long in comming? why tarry the weels of the Charet?* or as the Text sounds in your ears; *When, O when will it once be?* Doe not say as the people said in *Haggai's* time [i], *The time is not come, the time that the Lords house should be built*; for this made God so angry, that he did not blesse, but *blast their labours* till this were done [k].

h Judg. 5. 28.

i Hag. 1. 2.

k Ver. 9.

To conclude, remember ye *judge not for man, but for the Lord who is with you in the judgement* [l]; your authority is from him, your support is by him, and your account must be rendred to him; therefore protect the oppressed, punish the offender; encourage the godly, discourage the prophane: *Be an eye to the blind, a foot to the lame, a father to the poore, and the cause ye know not, search it out*, as holy *Job* did [m].

l 2 Chro. 19. 6

m Job 29. 15, 16.

In one word, be so valiant for God, so couragious for his truth, so zealous for his glory, so vigilant in your places, so wise in your deportment, so impartiall in your proceedings, so constant in your Covenant, so faithfull to your trust, that the *eye* which sees may blesse you, and the *eare* which heares may give witnesse to you, *That the wisdome of God is in you to doe judgement* [n].

n 1 Kin. 3. 28.

If it be thus (and O that it might be so) then not onely we, but all the Churches of Christ about us, will bring in their votes, and say, This is a Parliament that the Lord hath blessed, This is a Parliament that the Lord hath crowned.

FINIS.